

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1962 without my signature.

This bill is nearly identical to a measure I vetoed in 2004. My concerns with this bill remain unchanged. A mandate, no matter how small, will only serve to increase the overall cost of health care. I want to decrease the number of uninsured Californians. Increasing the cost of coverage moves in the opposite direction.

The choice is difficult – protect access to affordable health insurance when costs continue to increase for employers and individuals – or mandate that every person who pays for their own health insurance must buy coverage for maternity services.

Until the goals of prevention, affordability and the concept of shared responsibility are addressed through comprehensive health care reform, I must continue to veto one-sided mandates that only increase costs to the overall health care system.

For this reason, I am unable to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger